THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sir, telephone services of Jaisinghpur telephone exchange in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh are satisfactory and telephone complaints are attended to promptly.

(b) 3645 complaints were booked from January to 24th November 2003. Barring a few exceptional cases, most of the complaints were attended within 24 Hours.

(c) Jaisinghpur telephone exchange is serving a scattered area which is hilly terrain and lightning prone. Sometimes there is a delay in rectification of telephone faults due to cable breakdowns.

Allotment of PCO booths in Assam

229. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of educated unemployed youth has applied for Gramin PCO booths in North-Eastern Region particularly in the State of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years;

(c) the details of criteria adopted by Government for allotment of PCO booths among these persons; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of applications received in the North-Eastern Region including Assam during the last three years are as under:-

YEAR	NE Region (including Assam)	Assam
2000-2001	1490	1174
2001-2002	1880	1413
2002-2003	2529	2007

(c) PCO booths are allotted liberally to all the eligible applicants as per their registration subject to technical feasibility.

(d) Efforts are a foot to make the areas technically feasible by increasing the capacity of exchanges, installation of new exchanges wherever necessary and laying underground cables wherever required as also introduction of WLL based technology in areas not accessible by underground cable.

Welfare Schemes for foodgrains supply

230. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the Welfare Schemes of Government in which FCI supplies foodgrains either free or at highly subsidized rates;

(b) whether the food supplied under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) scheme and Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) are being fully utilized by the States/UTs; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PARASAD): (a) Foodgrains are not supplied free of cost by the FCI under any Welfare Scheme. However, foodgrains at subsidized rates are supplied by FCI under the following Welfare Schemes :

1. Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)
2. Mid-Day-Meal (MDM)
3. Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP)
4. Hostels and Welfare Institutions
5. Annapurna
6. Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls

(b) The percentage offtake of foodgrains under TPDS (AAY, BPL and APL) during 2002-03 was as under:

AAY	BPL	APL
85.73	59.34	5.91

(c) The lifting of foodgrains (rice and wheat) by States/UTs under TPDS depends on several factors, the most important being the parity between the Central Issue Prices (CIPs) and the open market prices, availability of foodgrains in the open market, purchasing power of the consumers especially those belonging to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, eating habits etc.